

CD 2011--88



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF MUSIC

University of Toronto Wind Ensemble

Gillian MacKay, conductor

Saturday, October 15, 2011

7:30 p.m. MacMillan Theatre

Edward Johnson Building

2011-12 SEASON

88 - - 106 13

University of Toronto Wind Ensemble

Gillian MacKay, conductor

Scotch Strathspey and Reel

Percy Grainger

1882-1961

The Marbled Midnight Mile

Steven Bryant

b. 1972

Symphony in B-flat

Paul Hindemith

1895-1963

I. Moderately fast, with vigour

II. Andantino grazioso

III. Fugue, rather broad

INTERMISSION

Illyrian Dances

Guy Woolfenden

b. 1937

I. Rondeau

II. Aubade

III. Gigue

Aurora Awakes

John Mackey

b. 1973

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Program Notes

The Marbled Midnight Mile (2009)

Steven Bryant

Born in 1972, American composer Steven Bryant has composed a number of works for the wind ensemble medium. Bryant's *The Marbled Midnight Mile* is a companion work to his earlier works *Dusk* and *First Light*, the three of which form a loosely related "night-cycle." *The Marbled Midnight Mile*, the middle movement in this cycle is meant to evoke the innumerable thoughts that arise in the solitude of night.

Yet despite its descriptive title, Bryant writes "There is no singular program or 'story' to the piece; rather I hope the listener finds his or her own associations and memories from long nights spent in quiet contemplation."

The Marbled Midnight Mile was commissioned by a consortium of High Schools and Colleges from Nebraska and received its premier by the University of Nebraska- Lincoln Wind Ensemble on November 19, 2009.

Illyrian Dances (1985)

Guy Woolfenden

British composer Guy Woolfenden has a history of composing music for chamber ensembles, orchestral works and wind ensembles.

Woolfenden's compositional experiences also include writing music for The Royal Shakespeare Company where he was the head of music from 1963- 1998. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that Woolfenden's *Illyrian Dances* was inspired by the make-believe place Illyria from Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*.

According to the composer "The precise geographical location of Illyria was not important to Shakespeare. What excited him was the resonance of the word itself and the romance of all far away, make-believe places. Illyria is Never Never Land and the idea of inventing dances for such a place intrigued me."

Illyrian Dances is comprised of three dances, beginning first with a Rondeau a rhythmically active movement, which uses a seven-measure refrain as the basis for highlighting the various sections in the

ensemble. The second movement entitled *Aubade* (referring to a morning song) is in ternary form with a hint of the approaching dawn at the close of the movement. *Illyrian Dances* closes with a lively Gigue in rondo form, which uses the primary theme in counterpoint to the subsequent sections of the movement.

Illyrian Dances was premiered at the fifth annual British Association of Symphonic Bands and Wind Ensembles conference and is dedicated to Timothy Reynish.

Symphony in B-flat (1951)

Paul Hindemith

Composer and teacher Paul Hindemith (1895- 1963) composed the *Symphony in B-flat* at the request of Lt. Col. Hugh Curry, leader of the United States Army Band. The three-movement *Symphony in B-flat* demonstrates Hindemith's mastery of counterpoint and organization of thematic material as well as his skill in utilizing complex rhythmic variations to enliven and strengthen his melodies.

The first movement is cast in the traditional Sonata-Allegro form with an exposition, development and recapitulation. However unlike other Sonata-Allegro forms where both themes return at the recapitulation (one after the other), Hindemith economically combines both themes together in strong counterpoint. The second movement begins with a duet between alto saxophone and cornet accompanied by a hemiolic chordal figure. Hindemith uses the duet theme and the thematic material from the first movement as a basis for the musical material throughout the rest of the second movement. The third movement of the *Symphony in B-flat* is a fugue with the theme first presented in the brass and saxophones in the opening measures of the movement. A secondary subject is also introduced, first on its own then in counterpoint to the initial fugal subject. The entire symphony closes in dramatic fashion with three chords in B-flat major with a flurry of notes in the upper woodwinds.

Paul Hindemith's *Symphony in B-flat* stands as a landmark work for the genre of wind music and served to convince other first-rank composers such

as Vincent Persichetti and Paul Creston to consider the wind band as a vehicle for serious musical composition.

Aurora Awakes (2009)

John Mackey

*Aurora now had left her saffron bed,
And beams of early light, the heav'ns o'erspread,
When, from a tow'r, the queen, with wakeful eyes,
Saw day point upward from the rosy skies.*

- Virgil, The Aeneid, Book IV, Lines 584-587

Aurora -the Roman goddess of dawn - is frequently associated with light and beauty. Heralding the coming of her brother Sol, the sun, Aurora rises each morning. In John Mackey's *Aurora Awakes*, the idea of heralding the coming of light is a central idea throughout the piece. Comprised of two main sections, the piece begins in a pre-dawn state of absolute tranquility and moves to a musical soundscape of sheer joy and radiance.

Another feature of *Aurora Awakes* is the idea of quotation in which Mackey uses two quotations from other musical compositions. The first and perhaps most recognizable quotation begins in the second section where Mackey develops an ostinato based on the guitar introduction to U2's "Where the Streets Have No Name." However, unlike the original where the guitar riff served to bookend the rest of the song, Mackey utilizes this motive throughout the second section and this repeated figure becomes an important unifying element through to the end of the work.

"When I heard that song on the radio last winter, I thought it was a kind of a shame that he only uses that little motive almost as a throwaway bookend. That's my favorite part of the song, so why not try to write an entire piece that uses that little hint of minimalism as its basis?"

The second more subtle quotation is from Gustav Holst's First Suite in E-flat for Military Band. The orchestration of the vivid E-flat chord that closes the Chaconne is nearly identical to the final sonority of *Aurora Awakes* leaving listeners with an distinctive impression of Holst's First Suite. Yet Mackey adds another element to his scoring of the chord by using instruments not in Holst's original:

"That has always been one of my favorite chords because it's just so damn bright. In a piece that's about the awaking of the goddess of dawn, you need a damn bright ending—and that was no topping Holst. Well... except to add crotales."

Quotations excerpted from a program note by Jake Wallace

Scotch Strathspey and Reel (1939)

Percy Grainger arr. Leroy Osmon

Australian composer Percy Grainger is an important figure in the wind band world. His many works include *Irish Tune from County Derry* and *Lincolnshire Posy* which occupy important places in the genre. *Scotch Strathspey and Reel*, like the aforementioned works, also make use of existing folksong material as the primary melodic ideas for the work.

Inspired by Celtic dance tunes, the work can be divided into two main sections, the Scotch Strathspey and the Reel. The Scotch Strathspey is a dance in 4/4 time and is characterized with the use of dotted rhythms which are commonly referred to as a "Scotch snap." In the Strathspey, Grainger makes use of six Scottish and Irish tunes evoking the idea of a large group of people playing at the same time and mingling harmoniously. The underlying tune of the Strathspey is "Marquis of Huntley" but Grainger also employs the sea-chanty "What Shall We Do With the Drunken Sailor?"

The Reel, another traditional dance tune, is the second main section which serves to contrast the dotted rhythmic nature of the Strathspey. Unlike the first section, the Reel only utilizes one folksong: "The Reel of Tulloch." However, Grainger manipulates this folksong in a variety of different ways including in augmentation and improvised harmonic polyphony as inspired by South Sea Island culture. It should also be noted that Grainger devises a countermelody to the Reel tune near the end of the work that is based off the text of the sea-chanty from the Strathspey.

Scotch Strathspey and Reel was first performed on May 21st, 1912 at Aeolian Hall, London with Grainger's own mother playing one of the guitar parts.

- Program notes by Erik Leung

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James McKay, Christian Sharpe, *bassoon*
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Roman Borys, *cello*; Joel Quarrington, *bass*

PROGRAM

Mozart: *Partita in E-flat major*

Mozart: *Serenade in C minor*

Dvořák: *Serenade in D minor, Op. 44*

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Biography

Gillian MacKay is an Associate Professor of Music of the University of Toronto, where she conducts the Wind Ensemble and teaches conducting and trumpet. She is also Associate Dean of Graduate Education. An award-winning teacher, Gillian has an active professional career as a trumpeter, conductor, adjudicator, and clinician. She has conducted honour bands throughout Canada and the United States, and is Associate Conductor of the Canadian Wind Orchestra. Dr. MacKay has adjudicated Canadian band festivals at local, provincial, and national levels in Canada. She has conducted honour bands and judged competitions in Singapore and Thailand.

Dr. MacKay has presented clinics and workshops at provincial and state conferences in Canada and the United States, and is known for her work on the relationship between conducting and mime. Also recognized as a conducting pedagogue, Gillian leads the University of Toronto Wind Conducting Symposium each July, and has been the guest instructor at other symposia in Canada and the United States. As a trumpeter, she has a particular interest in the French solo trumpet and cornet music of the 19th century.

Gillian holds degrees and diplomas from the University of Lethbridge, McGill University, the University of Calgary, and Northwestern University. Previously, she served as Instructor of Brass at Medicine Hat College, and Director of the School of Music at the University of Windsor.



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University of Toronto Wind Ensemble

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Lu, Chieh-Ying

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Elaine Jia Ying Cheng
Hyunjoo Choi
Jason Pak Hei Chum
Michael Dassios, *E-flat*
Caitlin De Rosenroll, *contra-*
bass
Le Lu
David Marshall, *E-flat*
Petra Nikolaou
Caitlin Nishimura, *bass*
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